UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/544
S/1997/826
30 October 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 30 October 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 29 October 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 29 October 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letters dated 15 and 20 October 1997 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations which contain allegations regarding "violations of the airspace of the Republic" (A/52/466-S/1997/801 and A/52/508-S/1997/813, respectively).

I would like to recall that previous similar allegations regarding so-called "airspace violations" were rejected in toto in our successive communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 7 October 1997 (A/52/449-S/1997/785, annex). Since the present Greek Cypriot charges are no different or more credible than the ones previously made, they do not merit a detailed reply. I wish to underline once again, however, that flights within the airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in the south has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever.

This endless tirade by the Greek Cypriot side will not suffice to cover up its intensive militarization campaign, which has effectively turned southern Cyprus into a war-machine, and its aggressive designs. This is evidenced by the increased level of military hardware and firepower involved in the provocative "Nikiforos-97" military exercises held jointly by the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece between 10 and 15 October 1997. Throughout the exercises, Greek aircraft and naval forces used live ammunition to fire at mock targets on land and at sea. At the closing ceremony, tanks and armoured carriers bore inscriptions on "liberating the occupied territories (north)". Greek F-16 fighter planes also participated in the ceremony, thereafter landing at the Paphos Military Airbase. "Nikiforos-97" has shown that the Greek-Greek Cypriot camp is gearing up for "joint offence" rather than the professed joint "defence", as the element of attack in joint manoeuvres is gaining weight.

Moreover, despite the fact that the decision of the Greek Cypriot administration to purchase the S-300 missile system has already created heightened tension on the island, recent reports in the Greek Cypriot press have indicated that the Greek Cypriot House of Representatives "Defence Committee" has released the necessary funds for the purchase of short-range anti-aircraft missile systems, in addition to the S-300 missiles. It will be recalled that the Security Council, by its resolutions 1092 (1996) and 1117 (1997), has expressed concern about the excessive level of armaments on the island, including the introduction of sophisticated weaponry.

Clearly, the aforementioned developments only serve to exacerbate the situation on the island and complicate the efforts to find a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus issue. All interested parties, therefore, should urge the Greek Cypriot side to abandon its reckless policy of escalation and tension

on the island and its efforts to undermine the established parameters of a settlement.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of
Northern Cyprus